

## SEM-II MIC ENGLISH

### Introduction of characters of Plautus Pot of Gold

#### **Euclio**

Euclio is an Athenian miser, characterized by his obsessive secrecy and paranoia about a pot of gold that was hidden by his grandfather and revealed to him by his household deity. This pot of gold becomes the focal point of his life, driving him nearly to madness as he goes to great lengths to conceal it. Despite his perpetual suspicion of theft from those around him, he agrees to the marriage of his daughter, Phaedria, to the wealthy and much older Megadorus because it doesn't require a dowry. Euclio is further bewildered by Phaedria's lack of desire to marry Megadorus, owing to her pregnancy by Lyconides, another suitor. Although initially driven by greed, Euclio undergoes a transformation and ultimately bestows the gold upon Phaedria and Lyconides, securing their future and happiness. His story serves as a moral tale derived from one of Menander's lost comedies.

#### **Megadorus**

Megadorus is an elderly, wealthy Athenian who desires to marry Phaedria purely because she lacks a dowry, avoiding the entanglements he believes would come with marrying a wealthy woman. His character adds a layer of satire to the play, with his pursuit of a vastly younger bride serving as a critique of older men's desires. Despite his intentions, he eventually steps aside to allow his nephew, Lyconides, to marry Phaedria, showcasing a moment of selflessness and familial loyalty. Megadorus also represents traditional Athenian values and serves as a vehicle for Plautus to criticize certain social norms.

#### **Lyconides**

Lyconides is the young Athenian man who fathers Phaedria's child. Initially, he is portrayed as irresponsible, having wronged Phaedria while intoxicated. However, he demonstrates growth by confessing to his mother, Eunomia, about his deed and

seeking her help to win Phaedria's hand from his uncle, Megadorus. His character is defined by his late but earnest attempt to rectify his mistakes, choosing to return the stolen gold to Euclio and marry Phaedria, thereby legitimizing their child. Through these actions, Lyconides redeems himself and gains the blessing of Euclio.

## **Household Deity**

The household deity plays a crucial role in *The Pot of Gold*, providing insights into the backstory of the gold. This spirit has safeguarded the treasure since it was entrusted to him by Euclio's grandfather. The deity's actions are driven by a desire to aid Phaedria, whom he favors due to her piety. His decision to reveal the gold's location to Euclio is intended to ameliorate the family's plight, showing a benevolent side in his guardianship and a profound concern for the well-being of those under his watch.

## **Eunomia**

Eunomia, the sister of Megadorus and mother of Lyconides, plays a pivotal role in advocating for her son's marriage to Phaedria. She is instrumental in persuading Megadorus to relinquish his claim to Phaedria, thus paving the way for the resolution of the play's conflicts. Her presence in the major scenes of the play signifies her influence and ability to navigate and settle familial disputes.

Eunomia's actions help bring about the play's conclusion and highlight her role as a stabilizing force within the narrative.

## **Staphyla**

Staphyla, the elderly servant in Euclio's household, is depicted as a caring and loyal figure. Her awareness of Phaedria's pregnancy and her concern for the young woman's well-being highlight her maternal instincts and dedication. Despite Euclio's initial suspicions of her intentions regarding his gold, Staphyla remains steadfast in her support and care for Phaedria, viewing her as a daughter. Her character underscores the themes of loyalty and familial care within the narrative.

## **Strobilus**

Strobilus is the clever slave of Lyconides, embodying the archetype of the "cunning slave" in Roman comedy. His intelligence is demonstrated through his successful theft of Euclio's gold, which he witnesses being hidden. Despite his initial intent to use the gold as leverage for his freedom, Strobilus is compelled to return the treasure. His actions, though morally ambiguous, showcase his loyalty to his master, Lyconides, and his willingness to put his master's desires before his own.

## **Pythodicus**

These characters serve as minor, yet colorful, additions to the narrative. Pythodicus is Megadorus' slave, while Anthrax and Congrio are cooks hired for the wedding preparations. The latter character, Congrio, is noted for his boldness in confronting Euclio after being mistreated. Phrygia and Eleusium, hired as music girls, contribute to the wedding festivities, reflecting the social customs of the time. Collectively, these characters provide a glimpse into the everyday life and social functions surrounding the principal events of the play.